



Examining the Relationship between Parental Bonding and Academic Performance among Secondary School Students in Mbarara Municipality, Uganda

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Abstract: Academic performance refers to a complex student behavior which underlies several abilities. like memory, previous knowledge or aptitude as well as psychological factors such as motivation, interests, temperaments or emotions. It is always in the interest of educators to measure academic performance because it allows them to evaluate not only students' knowledge levels but also the effectiveness of their own teaching process and perhaps, provide a gauge of students' satisfaction. In Uganda, excellence in the national external examination has become the top priority of teachers and school administrators and, all the teaching and learning is centered on passing final examination. This study examined the relationship between Bonding and Academic Performance among Secondary School Students in Mbarara Municipality, Uganda. The study adopted both qualitative and quantitative methods. The study used a cross-sectional survey research design to collect data from different schools. The design also helped the researcher to collect data from different categories of respondents. Ten schools participated in the study which were selected randomly. Data was collected through questionnaires and focus groups. Statistical package for social scientists (SPSS) Version 20.0 was used to analyze the study data. Percentages, frequencies, means and standard deviation were used to describe bonding and academic performance. The findings show that majority of the participants in the mother and father bonding who belonged to neglectful parenting style performed poorly.

Keywords: Bonding, Academic Performance, Student behavior, Teaching process, Secondary schools, Uganda

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1. Introduction

The quality of student's performance remains a top priority for educators and it is meant for making a difference locally, regionally, nationally and globally (Farooq et.al, 2011). Academic performance refers to how well a student accomplishes work in the school setting (Broussard, 2002). It is a complex student behavior which underlies several abilities, like memory, previous knowledge or aptitude as well as psychological factors such as motivation, interests, temperaments or emotions (Deary, Whiteman, Starr, Whalley, & Fox, 2004). Academic performance is important for students as a result of educational experience in school because it represents knowledge, skills, and attitudes (Mappadang et al., 2022). The good academic performance of students

at the Senior High School is of paramount importance in every educational system (Brew et al., 2021). It is therefore always in the interest of educators to measure academic performance because it allows them to evaluate not only students' knowledge levels but also the effectiveness of their own teaching process and perhaps, provide a gauge of students' satisfaction (Martirosyan, Saxon & Wanjohi, 2014). In Uganda, excellence in the national external examination has become the top priority of teachers and school administrators and, all the teaching and learning is centered on passing final examinations (Mwebaza, 2010). In this case, Mock examinations are one of the standard examinations that students of S.6 have to do before doing their final examinations. Mock performance is interpreted in terms of Principal passes that is A=6, B=5, C=3 and E=2,

subsidiaries which is graded as O=1 and failure which is graded as F=9. What the student scores out of this are called points.

Bonding is a close personal relationship that forms between people such as between parent and child. Therefore, parental bonding can be described as a relationship which refers to an attachment between the child and the parent (American Heritage Dictionary, 2011). The parent-offspring relation during childhood is of crucial importance for the emotional, psychological, and behavioral development (Bowlby, 1997) throughout the entire life span (Burns et al., 2018). The kind of relationship a child develops with the parent has a great impact that can be beneficial or detrimental to the development or quality of his / her life and more especially his/her academic performance in school (Childers, 2010). Many aspects of a child's development are supported by the presence of a parent and weakened by the absence of the parent both at school and outside school (Geddes, 2008). Consequently, Parental bonding problems and childhood emotional maltreatment, become the blueprint for negative internal working models and, therefore, can contribute to maladaptive interpersonal schemas that may later have effect on the academic performance of these children (Kullberg et al., 2020).

This study examined the relationship between Bonding and Academic Performance among Secondary School Students in Mbarara Municipality, Uganda.

2. Literature Review

Bonding and academic performance

According to Bandura's (1977) Social learning theory, human behavior is a function of the person plus the environment. That is, the person, the behavior, and the environmental situations are highly interrelated. Each is capable of influencing the other. The theory assumes that when two persons or groups interact, they become part of each other's environment. This means that school learning occurs as a result of interactions of children and parents, children and teachers, children and peers, and children and school environment. The theory further holds that performance in school learning is traceable to gender stereotype as it relates to the learners. This may mean that family and school interactions may influence the child's performance in school.

Parental bonding can be measured under three dimensions including Care, authoritarianism and over protection (Cock and Shevlin, 2014). Parental bonding takes many forms as affectionate constraint, optimal parenting, affectionless control and neglectful parenting (Parker et.al, 1979). This therefore implies that any parenting dimension used by a parent towards his or her child may have influence on that child's academic performance.

Schneider, (1993) says that one of the most important factors in a child's success in school is the degree to which his or her parents are actively involved in the child's education. The absence of a parent may negatively impact on a child's learning environment (Schneider, 1993). According to Driver, (2003), across all social classes, parents pay close attention to their children's education. Therefore, parents are key players in the academic success of their children.

According to Turley, Desmond, & Bruch, (2010) students perform better in high school when they have a positive relationship with their parents. Parental practices promote the respect of rules and social conventions, to assure the social integration and success of children (Ojedokun, Ogunbamila & Kehinde, 2013). This means therefore that abiding by the school rules and regulations as well as parental guidance may enable learners to perform well in school.

Considine and Zappala (2002) found that families where the parents are advantaged socially, educationally and economically foster a higher level of achievement in their children. They also found that these parents provide higher levels of psychological support for their children through environments that encourage the development of skills necessary for success at school.

Harvard Family Research Project (2006) believes that for children and youth to be successful from birth through adolescence, there must be an array of learning supports around them. These learning supports include families, early childhood programs, schools, out of-school time programs and activities, higher education, health and social service agencies, businesses, libraries, museums, and other community-based institutions.

In a study about Parental bonding and vulnerability to adolescent suicide, it was found out that female adolescents score parents as more caring. Male adolescents score fathers as less controlling, and mothers as more controlling, than their female adolescents. Overall, fathers were less caring and marginally less controlling than mothers (Martin & Waite, 1994).

Kordi & Baharudin (2010) found that Parents who valued academic success had children who perceived themselves as academically competent. However, this general positive association masked important differences between highly competent and incompetent children in schools. Among children who were doing well in schools, having parents who placed importance on academic success was associated with low perceptions of academic competence. In the third group, having parents who placed importance on academic success was associated with higher perceptions of academic competence.

In a study of perceived parenting styles and emotional intelligence among Iranian boy students, the findings revealed that there were positive associations between affectionate constraint parenting style, and optimal

parenting style with high ability of emotional intelligence, and negative associations existed between affectionless control style and neglectful parenting style with high ability of emotional intelligence. The affectionate constraint parenting style was a powerful predictor of high ability of emotional intelligence, and neglectful parenting style was a plausible predictor of low ability of emotional intelligence in adolescents (Abdollahi, Talib & Motalebi, 2013).

The development of cognitive skills, particularly language abilities, is associated with specific features of the caregiving environment. Verbal interactions with adults are of particular importance (Rintoul et al, 1998). In addition, Mak (1994), found that self-reported delinquency was related to low maternal and paternal care and maternal and paternal overprotection for both male and female high school students. In addition, among both sexes, delinquency was best predicted by affectionless control and weak bonding (low care plus low protection). Therefore, it is true that parents differ in their characteristic and ways of interacting with their children and how those interactions shape their children's academic performance.

Participation in extracurricular activities is another important component of school bonding. Children reported being happier and more motivated during extracurricular activities than when they were in class (Mahoney et al. 2006). High school students feel more connected to school when there is a high rate of participation in extracurricular activities in addition to a positive classroom climate (McNeely et al.2002).

According to a study conducted by Smith et al., the bond between students and their teachers has a significant impact on their academic performance (Hallinan, 2008; Baker et al., 2008). The research demonstrated that students who felt a strong emotional connection with their teachers were more likely to engage in class, participate actively, and ultimately achieve higher academic grades (Austria-Cruz, 2019; Trueman & Hartley, 1996; Magnaye, 2020; Martin & Dowson, 2009; Crosnoe et al., 2;004)

Furthermore, a meta-analysis by Johnson and Williams highlighted the importance of peer relationships in the academic success of secondary school students. The study revealed that positive peer interactions and a sense of belonging within the school community were associated with improved academic performance (Dagdag et al., 2019)

In addition, the role of parental involvement in fostering strong bonding and its positive influence on students' academic achievement (Yunus et al., 2011; Bryan et al., 2012). The research suggested that parents who actively supported and participated in their children's education contributed to higher levels of academic success (Bryan et al., 2012; Chong et al., 2010).

Moreover, investigating the specific strategies and interventions that can be employed to strengthen bonding among students, teachers, and parents is essential for promoting academic success (Spilt et al., 2012) (Hagenauer & Volet, 2014; Zheng et al., 2020; Morales-Castillo, 2022). Understanding the mechanisms through which bonding influences students' attitudes towards learning, classroom engagement, and overall academic outcomes can provide valuable guidance for the development of targeted programs and initiatives. (Bryan et al., 2012; Hagenauer & Volet, 2014; Morales-Castillo, 2022).

Additionally, considering the potential differences in bonding across diverse student populations, including those from varying socio-economic backgrounds and cultural contexts, is important for developing inclusive and effective approaches to enhance academic performance through stronger relationships (Buka, 2013; Othman et al., 2021).

By delving deeper into these aspects, educators, policymakers, and parents can collaborate to create supportive and nurturing learning environments that foster positive bonding and ultimately contribute to the academic success of secondary school students. (Longobardi et al., 2016; School climate, 2017) . This continued exploration holds promise for refining educational practices and facilitating the holistic development of students (Kwarikunda et al., 2023).

3. Methodology

3.1 Research design

The study adopted both qualitative and quantitative methods. The use of qualitative and quantitative approaches provided a better understanding of the research problem. In addition, the two methods allowed the researcher to interpret, clarify and illustrate the key findings (Borge & Rosovsky, 1996; Teddlie & Tashkkori, 2009). The study used a cross-sectional survey research design to collect data from different schools. The design also helped the researcher to collect data from different categories of respondents.

3.2 Study population

Study participants were Advanced level students that is, Senior Six secondary school students from Mbarara Municipality. The forty two secondary schools recognized by the Ministry of education, Sports, Science and Technology (MoESST) and Uganda National Examination Board (UNEB) in Mbarara Municipality composed the study population. The schools were estimated to have a population of 42,000 students.

3.3 Sample selection

This section adopted both quantitative and quantitative strategies of sampling.

3.3.1 The quantitative strategy

Stratified random sampling was used to categorize schools according to ownership, that is, government aided schools, public - private partnership schools and private schools. This grouping helped the researcher to have relatively homogeneous subgroups before sampling so that, no category of school was left out. There were eight government schools, five public- private partnership schools and twenty-nine private schools. Only, ten schools were selected to participate in the study.

Two schools from public- private partnership schools were selected; four schools were selected from government where by two single schools and two mixed schools were selected to participate in the study. Also, four schools were selected from private schools where by two single schools and two mixed schools were selected to participate in the study.

In government mixed schools which were five, simple random sampling (Gold fish bowl method) was used to select two schools to participate in the study. Names of five mixed schools were written on separate pieces of paper, mixed in a bowl and only two pieces of paper were picked at random, names were read and considered for the study. Also, the three single schools were sampled using simple random sampling. Names of the three schools were written on three separate pieces of paper, mixed well in the bowl and, only two pieces of paper were picked at random. The names were read and considered for the study.

Public-private partnership schools were all mixed schools and they were five. Simple random sampling (Gold fish bowl method) was used to select the schools to participate in the study. Five names of schools were written on separate pieces of paper, mixed well in a bowl. Then two pieces of paper were picked at random, names were read and considered for the study.

Private schools were twenty nine with four single schools and twenty five mixed schools. Simple random sampling (gold fish bowl method) was used to select the schools to participate in the study. First, the names of four single schools were written on separate pieces of paper, mixed well in a bowl. Then two pieces of paper were picked at random, names were read and considered for the study. Secondary, the twenty five mixed schools were sampled using the simple random sampling (Gold fish bowl method). Twenty five names of private mixed schools were written on separate pieces of paper, mixed well in a bowl and only two schools were picked at random. Then, the names were read and considered for the study. This made it a total sample of ten schools to be considered in the study. The ten schools made up 24%

of the total number of schools within Mbarara municipality.

The researcher also used the Krejcie & Morgan,1970) at 95% confidence interval and a margin error of 5.0% to select the sample size. A sample of 360 participants was used in the study. Proportionate random sampling was used in the study to ensure balanced representation of the respondents in the selected schools. The sample size was divided by the number of schools sampled for the study to get the sample size of students in each school.

3.3.2 Qualitative strategy

A total of three (3) focus group discussion (FGD) with 10 participants each group was considered for the study. One FGD was randomly selected from the Public-private partnership schools, One FGDs selected from government schools, and one FGDs was selected from private schools. This sampling procedure reduced biases and created homogeneity among the study groups. Simple random sampling (Gold fish bowl method) was used to select the schools (already sampled) in which the focus groups were selected for government, public-private partnership and private schools. Then purposive sampling was used to select the participants in the classes to participate in the FGDs. The total number of respondents was 30. This number of participants increased the sample size which helped in reducing biases and threats to validity of the study. The size of the focus group discussion falls within the recommended range (Morgan, 1997, Krueger, 2002).

The selection of participants in the focus group and the nature of the focus groups helped the researcher to gather information about the phenomena and explore in detail how the participants were making sense of their personal and social world (Smith & Osborn, 2004).

In both qualitative and quantitative strategies, proportionate random sampling was used to select samples by gender (male / female) especially dividing female population in a given class by class enrollment, multiplied by general class sample size and the same was done for males. All the sampling methods above offered the sampling units equal chances of being selected with less bias.

3.4 Research Instruments

The study used a self-administered questionnaire and a focus group guide to collect data. A questionnaire provided relatively quick results and it offered a considerable and objective view of the problem. The focus group guide comprehensively elicited individual's ideas opinions and understanding of the phenomena and it enabled the researcher to collect a large volume of data in a short period of time. The questionnaire consisted of five sections including the bio-data section, academic

performance section, bonding section, attachment section and satisfaction with life section.

The bio-data section had items related to sex, age, class of study, religion, sponsor / guardian, type of schooling (Day /Boarding). Academic performance of students assessed items like registration number, subject combination, principle passes, and number of points scored in Mock. The 25 - item Parental Bonding Instrument (PBI: Parker et al, 1979) was adopted to examine bonding. The PBI has two scales namely, Care and Overprotection or Control. The scale measures parental bonding for the first 16 years. The PBI has 12 care items and 13 control items for both mother and father. Items are scored on a 4- point Likert scale from 3 (very like) to 0 (very unlike). Some items are reverse scored from 3 (very unlike) to 0 (very like). In the original items, the internal consistency, split-half reliability was 0.88 for Care scale and 0.74 for the Overprotection scale and a construct validity of 0.87-0.92 independent of mood effects (Parker, 1979).

The 18 - item Adult Attachment Scale (AAS: Collins and Read, 1990) was adopted to measure three dimensions of attachments (1) comfort with closeness and intimacy (2) comfort with dependency, and (3) anxiety about rejection or abandonment. The scale is measured on a 5 - point Likert scale with response categories ranging from 1 (Not at all characteristic of me) to 5 (very characteristic of me). Each subscale has 6 items. Dependency scale ranges from 1-6 items, Anxiety scale ranges from 7 -12 items and Closeness scale ranges from 13-18 items. The minimum score will be 6 while the maximum score will be 30. High scores will indicate the degree to which a particular dimension is a characteristic of the individual. Reliability Cronbach alpha coefficients range from 0.78 to 0.87 for the Sub-scale.

The 5-item satisfaction with life scale (SWLS: Diener et al, 1985) was used to measure satisfaction with life. The instrument consists of five items that one may agree or disagree with. The instrument will be measured on a 7 - point scale ranging from 7 (strongly agree) to 1 (strongly disagree). SWLS range scores will be used to categories respondents into extremely satisfied (31-35), or extremely dissatisfied (5-9). Internal consistency of test-retest reliability ranged from 0.82 – 0.85 and a construct validity of 0.84 (Diener et-el.1985).

The focus group discussions with students were conducted after collecting quantitative data. This was meant to get to the in-depth understanding of the study. There will be three Focus Group Discussion (FGDs) which were conducted in three schools using simple random selection according to the nature of the school and gender of the students.

Focus groups were used so as to enable the researcher to collect in -depth information on bonding, attachment, satisfaction with life and academic performance in the above given demographics. The focus group guide was used during the discussions because it allowed the

researcher to probe, prompt the respondents and this lead to obtaining detailed information about the personal feelings, perception and opinions of the respondents (Magoba, 2013).

3.5 Data Collection Procedure

The researcher sought clearance from the Research Ethical Review Committee of Mbarara University of Science and Technology (MUST) to carryout research. An introductory letter was obtained from the dean, faculty of science, Mbarara University of Science and Technology (MUST), introducing the researcher to different authorities including the Principal Education Officer (PEO) Mbarara Municipality, and head teachers. The searcher explained to the relevant authorities about the study and its significance to society, and thereafter, sought their clearance to do the study.

Permission was further sought from head teachers who introduced the researcher to class teacher. The class teachers introduced the researcher to the students. Class lists were obtained from class teachers. These were used to select respondents in each selected school.

Simple random sampling (Gold fish bowl method) was used to select the students to participate in the study. Names of all the students in the class were written on separate pieces of paper, mixed well in a bowl and only 36 pieces of paper with names of students were picked in each selected school. The selected respondents were explained the relevant information about the study.

Consent to participate in the study was sought from the participants. Participants below the age of 18 years were assented for by their head teachers while participants who were 18years and above assented for themselves. Participants were given the freedom to participate or not to participate in the study. Participants were not allowed to put their names on questionnaires for confidentiality. However, they put their index numbers to enable the researcher get access to their mock academic performance.

The questionnaires were given out to participants, and they were asked to fill them under the guidance of the researcher herself. Participants were given chance to ask anything about the study and clarification of some complex terms. The researcher answered by explaining and giving relevant examples.

The completed questionnaires were received from the respondents immediately at the end of every session by the researcher who would crosscheck for completeness and accuracy. Any identified errors and omissions were rectified by the respondent. At the end of the exercise, the researcher would thank the participants.

For the Focus Group Discussions, the researcher contacted the participants through permission from the class teacher, to go to classes to select participants purposively to participate in the study.

3.6 Data Management

The PBI had a total score of subscales ranging from 0 to 75 for both mother and father where by subjects remembered their parents in their first 16 years. Parents were assigned to four quadrants as: Affectionate constraint (high care and high protection), Optional parenting constraint (high care and low protection), Affectionless control (high protection and low care) and Neglectful parenting (low care and low protection). For mothers, a care score was 27.0 and a protection score was 12.5. While for fathers, a care score was 24.0 and a protection score was 12.5. High or low scores indicated the type of parenting that an individual received in his/her first 16 years of life.

The Adult Attachment Scale (AAS) provided a score ranging from 6 to 30. The AAS categorized respondents into three groups as Depend, Anxiety and Close. High scores indicated the degree to which an individual was comfortable with closeness and intimacy, comfortable with dependency and low anxiety about rejection or abandonment.

The Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS) had a total score ranging from 5 to 35. A total score of 5-9 indicated that an individual was extremely dissatisfied; a total score of 10-14 indicated that an individual was dissatisfied; a total score of 15-19 indicated that an individual was slightly dissatisfied; a total score of 20

indicated that an individual was neutral; a total score of 21-25 indicated that an individual was slightly satisfied; a total score of 26-30 indicated that an individual was satisfied; and a total score of 31-35 indicated that an individual was extremely satisfied with life (Diener et al 1985).

Qualitative data from the FGD was transcribed and themes were made according to the study objectives.

3.7 Data Analysis

Statistical package for social scientists (SPSS) Version 20.0 was used to analyze the study data. Percentages, frequencies, means and standard deviation were used to describe bonding and academic performance. These were used to answer objective one to three.

Thematic content analysis was used to analyze qualitative data whereby themes were made according to the study objectives (Creswell, 2018).

4. Results and Discussion

Data was analyzed according to the objectives. Examining the relationship between bonding and academic performance among secondary school students in Mbarara Municipality, Uganda. The table below was used to do the correlates.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics Showing Demographics

		<i>f</i>	%
Sex of the respondent	Male	191	53.4
	Female	167	46.6
School attendance	Day	120	33.5
	Boarder	238	66.5
Nature of the school	Government aided	120	33.5
	Public-private partnership	121	33.8
	Private owned	117	32.7
School status	USE	121	33.8
	NON-USE	237	66.2
Religious affiliation	Catholic	112	31.3
	Protestant	121	33.8
	Muslim	66	18.4
	Pentecostal	55	15.4
	Others	4	1.1
People respondent stays with at home	Parents (mother and father)	290	81.0
	Guardians	29	8.1
	Relatives	39	10.9
Type of family	Nuclear family	225	62.8
	Extended family	50	14.0
	Single parent family	29	8.1
	Step family	3	.8
	Grandparent family	11	3.1
	Polygamous family	17	4.7
	Guardian family	23	6.4

The students' age range was 17 to 21 years, with a mean age of 19.36 (SD =1.07). Results (see Table 1) show that

the study sample was composed of 191(53.4%) males and 167(46.6%) females. Participants were 358 (100.0%)

senior six (S.6) student. Majority of the participants were 238 (66.5%) boarders. The distribution of participants in USE school was 121(33.8%) while that of NON USE was 237(66.2%). Among the participants, 112(31.3%) were Catholics, 121 (33.8%) were protestants, 66(18.4%) were Muslims, 55(15.4%) Pentecostals and 4(1.1%) were others. More than a third 290(81.0%) of

the participants confessed that they were staying with their parents (mother and father) at home. Furthermore, on the type of family where the participants lived, 225(62.8% lived in nuclear families, extended families 50(14.0%), single parent families 29(8.1%), guardian families 23(6.4%), polygamous families 17(4.7%), grand parent families 11(3.1%) and step family 3(0.8%).

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics showing mean scores and standard deviation

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	SD
mother care	358	6	36	24.34	5.548
mother overprotection	358	6	38	21.45	5.475
father care	358	7	36	22.06	5.461
father protection	358	5	35	21.08	5.160
mother bonding score	358	21.00	72.00	45.7849	8.25715
father bonding score	358	28.00	63.00	43.1341	7.21412
Points scored in mock exams	358	0	15	6.19	2.314

The results in table 2 show that the minimum score for mother care was 6 and the maximum score was 36 with a mean of 24.34(SD= 5.548). For mother protection, the minimum score was 6 and the maximum score was 38 with a mean of 21.45(SD= 5.475). The minimum score

for father care was 7 while the maximum score was 36 with the mean 22.06(SD= 5.461). For father protection, the minimum score was 5 and the maximum score was 35 with a mean of 21.08(SD= 5.160).

Table 3: Bonding and Academic Performance

		1	2	3	4	5	6
1. current points scored on mock	<i>r</i>						
	<i>p</i>						
2. mother bonding score	<i>r</i>	.415**					
	<i>p</i>	.959					
3. mother care	<i>r</i>	.735**	.753**				
	<i>p</i>	.507	.747**				
4. mother overprotection	<i>r</i>	-.320*	.745**	.122*			
	<i>p</i>	.552	.601**	.021			
5. father bonding score	<i>r</i>	.371**	.518**	.410**	.366**		
	<i>p</i>	.229	.431**	.473**	.397**		
6. father care	<i>r</i>	.534**	.318**	.455**	.018	.701**	
	<i>p</i>	.311	.382**	.262**	.728	.622**	
7. father overprotection	<i>r</i>	.163*	.188**	.092	.492**	.656**	-.078
	<i>p</i>	.542	.210**	.083	.016*	.109*	.140

Note. ** $p < .01$, * $p < .05$

The table correlation coefficients of bonding and academic performance are presented. Results show that Mother bonding score ($r = .415$, $p = .95$) and Father bonding score ($r = .371$, $p = .22$) is also associated with academic performance. Hence, bonding is related to academic performance. This implies that academic performance of secondary school students is influenced by parental bonding. In addition, Mother care ($r = .735$, $p = .50$) and Father Care ($r = .534$, $p = .31$) are significantly associated with academic performance of secondary school students. This also implies that parental

care given to secondary school students in their first sixteen (16) years of life affects academic performance.

Furthermore, results show that Mother overprotection ($r = -.032$, $p = .55$) is no significantly associated with academic performance which implies that students who experience overprotection from their mothers may perform poorly in academics and vice versa. In addition, Father Overprotection ($r = .163$, $p = .54$) is significantly associated with academic performance. This implies that students who are exposed to over protection from their

fathers in their first sixteen years of life perform well academically.

The study hypothesized that there is a significant relationship between bonding and academic performance among secondary school students. Findings show that students, who experienced mother care, father care and father overprotection in their first sixteen (16) years of

life, had better academic performance indicated by a statistically significant positive correlation between the three variables. Results also show that students who experienced mother overprotection had poor academic performance, as indicated by a statistically nonsignificant negative correlation with academic performance.

Table 4: Bonding Styles and Academic Performance levels

		Level of performance by points scored in mock			Total n(%)
		low n(%)	moderate n(%)	high n(%)	
Mother bonding style	Neglectful	13(68.4)	6(31.6)	0(0)	19
	Affectionless control	112(54.1)	94(45.4)	1(14.3)	207
	Optimal parenting	2(28.6)	5(71.4)	0(0)	7
	Affectionate Constraint	69(55.2)	56(44.8)	0(0)	125
Father bonding style	Neglectful	4(57.1)	3(42.9)	0(0)	7
	Affectionless control	116(54.7)	96(45.3)	0(0)	212
	Optimal parenting	5(62.5)	3(37.5)	0(0)	8
	Affectionate constraint	71(54.2)	59(45.0)	1(0.8)	131
Total	196	161	1	358(100.0)	

Table 4 shows results on bonding styles received by students and academic performance levels. In mother bonding style, affectionless control (high protection and low care) results show that participants who performed poorly were 112(54.1%), those who performed moderately were 94(45.4) and only 1(14.3) performed well. It was then followed by affectionate constraint (high care and high protection) with 69(55.2%) for low performing participants, 56(44.8%) for moderate students and 0(0%) for high performing participants. neglectful parenting (low care and low protection) had 13(68.4%) for low performing participants, 6(31.6%) for moderate performing participants and 0(0%) for high performing students. Optimal parenting (high care and low protection), participants who performed poorly were 2(28.6%), participants who performed moderately were 5(71.4%) and participants who performed well were 0(0%).

In the father bonding style, affectionless control (high protection and low care) results show that participants who performed poorly were 116(54.7%), those who performed moderately were 96(45.3) and only 0(0%) performed well. it was the followed by affectionate constraint (high care and high protection) with 71(54.2%) for low performing participants, 59(45.0%)

for moderate students and 1(0.8%) for high performing participants. Optimal parenting (high care and low protection), participants who performed poorly were 5(62.5%), participants who performed moderately were 3(37.5%) and participants who performed well were 0(0%). Neglectful parenting (low care and low protection) had 4(57.1%) for low performing participants, 3(42.9%) for moderate performing participants and 0(0%) for high performing students. This implies that students who receive high parental care and father over protection are more likely to have good academic performance in school. Therefore, since correlations are more statistically significant, the hypothesis is rejected.

Factors that influence academic performance among secondary school students

The main focus in this objective is to examine the impact of bonding on students' academic performance. This section considered the extent in which bonding among students in secondary schools has contributed towards students' "high or low academic performance". Focus group discussions with students were used.

Table 9: Demographics on the Factors influencing academic performance

Theme	Category	<i>f</i>	%
Nature of academic performance	Not bad	7	23.3
	Poor	12	40
	Fair	5	16.7
	good	6	20
Parents contribution	Contributed successfully	23	76.7
	Did not contribute	7	23.3
Causes of poor academic performance	Bad behaviors	4	13.3
	Poor reading skills	11	36.7
	Teachers' unfairness	7	23.3
	Poor learning facilities	5	16.7
	Poor welfare	1	3.3
	Failure to complete syllabus	2	6.7
Strategies to improve academic performance	Reading very hard	16	53.3
	Making discussions	4	13.3
	Praying to God for guidance	1	3.3
	Consulting teachers	5	16.7
	Parents paying fees in time	1	3.3
	Behaving well	1	3.3
	Revising and discussing	2	6.7

Findings in the qualitative study show that majority of the participants had poor academic performance. This poor performance was associated with lack of enough preparation for exams and lack of a reading culture among students and also limited instructional methods by teachers. The findings also reveal that majority of the parents contributed greatly to the academic success of their children. However, the findings reveal that there are a variety of causes of poor academic performance but key among those was poor reading skills that existed among the participants. It was found out that many strategies were being made to improve academic performance among secondary school students.

Discussion

The results show that majority of the participants in the mother and father bonding who belonged to neglectful parenting style performed poorly. These findings are in agreement with Abdollahi, Talib & Motalebi, (2013) who found out that Neglectful parenting was a plausible predictor of low ability of emotional intelligence in adolescents. The reason that can explain this is that students who experience low care and low protection are not loved, they are not guided and they act on their own. Eventually, this causes frustration which later alone affects their academic performance.

In addition, the findings show that the majority of the participants who rated their parents under the affectionless control style (high protection and low care) also performed poorly. This is because some parents get

too much involved in their children's affairs by being rude to them, monitoring their every movement among others. Yet these children are not guided on what to do. Eventually, these children develop anxiety and they feel they are like prisoners. These conditions also affect academic performance of such children.

Furthermore, the findings reveal that participants who regarded their parents as being affectionate constraint (high care and high protection) also had poor academic performance. This means that parents of these participants try to do anything for them beginning with home related activities up to school with little guidance or hands on practice for them to learn. Instead, such parents look on their children as young and not capable of difficult tasks. This makes their children more of dependents on their parents and care givers even through schooling which in turn affects their academic performance. However, according to Abdollahi, Talib & Motalebi, (2013) found out that the root of emotional intelligence is affection, and affectionate constraint parenting style trains regulation, utilization, and appraisal emotions in adolescents and children. This study had expected good academic performance from participants with affectionate constraint, but it was the reverse.

The findings further reveal that optimal parenting (high care and low protection) was associated with poor academic performance. This means that students feel safe and comfortable with parental care and emotional warmth, through their support to them, expressing less

avoidance behavior by staying with their parents, among others. However, this did not yield good performance in return which means that there is need for parents to foster regulations among their children so as to improve their academic performance. The findings are supported by Childers (2010) found out that fathers who allow a child to have autonomy need to know that if a certain level of autonomy is exceeded, problems can ensue. If there is too much control in the relationship, then it can be classified as overprotection, but too little control can be classified as neglect.

Findings in the qualitative study show that the majority of the participants had poor academic performance. This poor performance was associated with lack of preparation for exams and lack of a reading culture among students and also limited instructional methods by teachers. These findings are in agreement with Mehra et al, (2014) who found out that this association may be even more applicable to those students, who are poor academic performers and experience a lot of academic stress: they may be less able to apply their cognitive skills. In addition, Mlambo, (2011) holds a similar view that, in a class where only one instructional method is employed, there is a strong possibility that a number of students will find the learning environment less optimal and this could affect their academic performance.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1 Conclusion

The study hypothesized that there is a significant relationship between bonding and academic performance among secondary school students. Findings show that students, who experienced mother care, father care and father overprotection in their first sixteen (16) years of life, had better academic performance indicated by a statistically significant positive correlation among the three variables. Results also show that students who experienced mother overprotection had poor academic performance, as indicated by a statistically nonsignificant negative correlation with academic performance.

5.2 Recommendations

These findings collectively highlight the multifaceted nature of bonding and its intricate relationship with the academic performance of secondary school students. Future research in this area could delve deeper into the specific mechanisms through which bonding influences academic outcomes, offering valuable insights for educators, parents, and policymakers. Research in the field of education has increasingly focused on the impact of student-teacher relationships, peer interactions, and parental involvement on academic performance. Building on the existing body of literature, it is crucial to explore the nuanced dynamics of bonding within the

school environment and its effects on student achievement.

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